

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 have been amended to correct minor idiomatic errors. Claims 5, 6 and 7 have been amended and new claim 8-12 have been added to eliminate multiple dependency of the claims. Support for new claims can be found, for example, in originally presented claim 5, 6 and 7. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully submit that their application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-7 are amended as follows:

1. (Amended) [Process] A process for the fashioning of a permanent connection between at least 2 components of an object, with at least one component thereof being a sealing or connecting component obtained by moulding of a thermoplastic elastomeric material, [characterized in that the component is subject to a treatment] comprising [the following steps]:
 - a. stretching [of the] said one component of thermoplastic elastomeric material;
 - b. [relaxation of the] relaxing said one component subjected to step (a) at ambient temperature;
 - d. [placement of the] placing said one component obtained in step (b) at the location of the desired connection in the object;
 - d. [exposure] exposing said one object to an increased temperature of at most about 20°C below the melting point of the thermoplastic elastomer.
2. (Amended) [Process] A process according to claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the thermoplastic elastomer is a copolyether ester.

3. (Amended) [Sealing] A sealing or connecting component for the fashioning of a permanent connection, obtained by a process comprising [the steps of]:

- a. moulding the component from a thermoplastic elastomeric material;
- b. stretching [of] the component;
- c. [relaxation of] relaxing the component at ambient temperature.

4. (Amended) [Sealing] A sealing or connecting component according to claim 3, [characterized in that] wherein the thermoplastic elastomer is a copolyether ester.

5. (Amended) [Process] A process for the fashioning of a permanent connection between at least 2 components of an object, with at least one sealing or connecting component according to [any one of claims 3-4] claim 3, comprising [the steps of]:

- a. [placement of the] placing said sealing or connecting component at the location of the desired connection in the object;
- b. [exposure] exposing said sealing or connecting to an increased temperature of at most about 20°C below the melting point of the thermoplastic elastomer.

6. (Amended) [Sealing] A sealing or connecting component according to claim 3 [or 4, or as used in claim 1 or 2, chosen] selected from [the group of]body plugs, gasket rings, sealing rings, or shrink-on sleeveings.

7. (Amended) [Object] An object containing at least one fashioned permanent connection obtained by the process according to [any one of claims 1, 2 or 5] claim 1.

New claims 8-12 have been added.

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